

Attack On The Autonomy Of Educational Institutions In West Bengal

—A Flagrant Violation Of The Democratic Aspiration Of The People By The "Left Front" Government

The ordinance promulgated by the 'Left Front' Government of West Bengal to supersede the four universities of the state including the University of Calcutta, the premier university of the country, with longstanding glorious tradition of autonomy and academic freedom came as a blow on the democratic aspirations of the people of the country.

The perpetration of such an anti-democratic move, which smacks of high handedness and authoritarianism, we knew, was once generally considered to be the monopoly right of the Congress Party whose sole object during its regime was to trample down the democracy and democratic rights in all walks of social life of the people so as to fulfil the class interest of the ruling capitalist class of the country.

Congress brought encroachments on the autonomy of educational institutions

The supersessions of the Viswabharati University of West Bengal and Utkal University of Orissa and the five universities of Bihar all at a time, in the past, and to add more the supersession of the bodies of different universities during Emergency—all these anti-democratic despotic measures aimed at establishing regimentation of thought in the academic arena, were undertaken by the then ruling Congress Party with the object of serving the interest of the ruling capitalist class engaged in its bid to establish total fascism in the country. But even the past Congress governments of West Bengal beginning from the period of Sri Bidhan Chandra Roy down to Sri Sidharta Shankar Roy dared not supersede the University of Calcutta which once in the past, under the leadership of its the then academic stalwarts could preserve its autonomy even during the British imperialist regime, and which in the post-independence days too, till the other day, inspite of growing attack on its autonomy could still enjoy greater autonomy in comparison with the other universities of the country.

But, what we observe to day is that, it is the so-

tary democracy emerged as the political superstructure of the then existing competitive capitalist economy, in the academic field, the institutions enjoyed autonomy and academic freedom—a thing which was quite in conformity with the prevailing relatively wider democratic environment, norms, ethics and rights in the social life. But later on the growth of monopoly

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KERALA AIDSO CONFERENCE

Held with great enthusiasm and success CPI(M)'s dastardly attack on the leaders

The two day state conference of All India Democratic Students Organisation organised on 12th-13th January by the Kerala State Organising Committee of AIDSO scored big success and concluded with a well attended public meeting at Chinnakada square in Quilon on 13th January. The strenuous work of many comrades turning their deep grief at the premature, sad and sudden demise of the beloved comrade V. Natarajan, the former secretary of Quilon District Committee and an important leader and organiser of Kerala State Organising Committee of SUCI made the programme a grand success. Frustrated at their failure to stop the march of AIDSO which carries the revolutionary banner of the thoughts of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the greatest Marxist philosophers of the era, a sinister conspiracy to bring criminal attack on the lives of the top ranking state AIDSO and SUCI leaders was hatched by CPI(M)-SFI on the concluding day. The pseudo-communists are not only showing their real face but they reveal their panic at the march of revolutionary Marxism in the State.

The delegate session comprising three sittings was held on 12th January in the YMCA Hall, Quilon. Comrade M. Subramani, member Kerala State Organising Committee of AIDSO and the newly elected president of Kerala State Council of AIDSO presided.

Sri N. K. Rajagopal, Professor of T.K.M. Engineering College, Quilon member of Kerala University Senate and a leading

personality in the field of social cultural movement in Kerala inaugurated the conference. In his inaugural speech Prof. Rajagopal while expressing his gratitude to the organisers for conferring in him the honour of inaugurating this historic conference held:

"DSO is the only organisation which approaches the students' problems with the seriousness it deserves. We all know

DSO is as yet, not a strong force in Kerala. We see that all those students organisations who have grip over the students even now, derive their so-called strength from mean and vulgar means, politics and culture. That is why for DSO, there remains an uphill task in its march and progress. But there is no reason to despair because DSO is the only students' organisation in our country which has a revolutionary scientific outlook and a new moral and ethical outlook which alone can enliven the society. Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has taught us that the kernel of the organisation which is to be the torch bearer of the social change lies in its higher cultural moral ethical standard."

Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee, the General Secretary of AIDSO dealt in details the various problems confronting students' and democratic movements. At the out set she took up the question as to whether

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MAKE SUCI CANDIDATES IN ASSAM VICTORIOUS

LIST OF THE CANDIDATES

Cachar District ;

- 1) Dholai (Sc.)—Suresh Chandra Chowdhury.
- 2) Lakhipur—Prof. Radhakanta Tanti.

Kamrup District :

- 1) Patacharkuchi—Provat Chandra Khátoniar.

Darrang District :

- 1) Sipajhar—Samarendra Narayan Deb.

Goalpara District :

- 1) Salmara South—Prof. Dewan Jainul Abedin.
- 2) Jaleswar—Monowar Hossain.
- 3) Goalpara West—Nazmul Haque.
- 4) Goalpara East—Prof. Chandralekha Das.

Comrade Asit Bhattacharjee, Secretary Assam State Committee, SUCI, has issued the following statement to the press:

"The people of Assam will have to go to the polls at the close of this month. It is high time that they decide the correct line which alone can advance the cause of the toiling

people.

"The history of Congress rule, for the last thirty years, is the history of misrule, poverty, destitution political persecution and cultural degeneration of the people. As the defender of the exploitative capitalist state machine, which defends the rule of capital, the Congress Party being

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The Constituents of the 'Left Front' have Stepped into the Same Shoe Left by the Congress and Dishing out the Same Logic in Defence

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capitalism which eventually eliminated free competition from the economic field, had its corresponding effect in curbing democracy, democratic and political rights of the people and taking away of autonomy and academic freedom of the educational institutions. Likewise, in our country too, till the early days of the post-independence period, so long capitalism did not enter the stage of full-fledged monopoly, when parliamentary democracy was at its early stage and when a relatively wider democratic environment was in existence in the material life of the society—in conformity with the prevailing free competition in the economic field in a relatively wider scale, the educational institutions enjoyed greater autonomy and the tendency to establish governmental control was not then strongly felt. But subsequently as monopoly capitalism developed, doing away with the free competition in the economic field the relatively wider democracy, democratic and political rights in the political superstructure was bound to be destroyed. In the academic field the same effect was being manifested on the one hand in establishing government controlled universities and on the other hand in curtailing the autonomy of the educational institutions and more so of the universities by establishing the control of the government vis-a-vis the party in power, through superseding the autonomous bodies of the universities by government nominated bodies or persons. Such an anti-democratic, authoritarian move—under whatever plea or raising whatever slogans it may be undertaken, is therefore bound to accelerate the process of regimentation of thought and fascization in the academic sphere. So, in

a capitalist state, an elected government, whatever it may claim regarding its character, but as it is always the caretaker of the capitalist state, any such anti-democratic move on its part which aims at forcibly imposing the thoughts and policy of the ruling party in the academic field, violating all democratic norms and ethics cannot but help only the reactionary ruling capitalist class and the capitalist state machine aiming at trampling the democratic rights of the people and laying the basis of all out fascism in the country. Those who with whatever plea direct such a blow on autonomy, therefore, serves knowingly or unknowingly the class interest of the reactionary ruling capitalist class of the country.

What is the real meaning of autonomy of universities

These people either being ignorant of or guided by some ill-motivated design often try to create misunderstanding and confusion among the people regarding the real role of autonomy. They should note that in a democratic set up, the existence of autonomy and academic freedom which is synonymous with the prevalence of democratic norms and ethics in the academic arena works as a pre-condition for the creation of cross-currents of and dialogues between different thoughts and ideas free from the unethical influence and domination of the powers-that-be so that, correct scientific views and truths may emerge out of these debates and discussions, and establish themselves in the academic life of the society—a thing which is essential in the field of education that tackles the domain of knowledge and epistemology.

Even the Gajendra Gadkar Committee once appointed by the UGC on the Governance of the Universities and Colleges

could not ignore the role of autonomy in the field of education and observed: "The concept of university autonomy is often misunderstood. It is not a 'legal' concept, not even a constitutional concept. It is an ethical concept. The claim for autonomy is made by the university not as a matter of privilege but on the ground that such an autonomy is a condition precedent if the universities are to discharge their duties and obligations effectively and efficiently as regards imparting and advancement of knowledge and also making their unique contribution to the life and development of nations".

So, one must agree that the issue of preserving autonomy of the universities is of paramount importance to the democratic minded people and more particularly so, to the genuine leftists and the Marxist-Leninists.

In a democratic set up, they are conscious of their bounden duty to fight for preservation and extension of democracy and democratic rights in all aspects of social life and not to curb it on any plea. Because, they realise that the preservation and extension of democratic environment in all walks of social life vis-a-vis growth of left and democratic movement is essential for the growth of democratic and political consciousness among the people engaged in their struggle for revolutionary transformation of the state and society. So, they, in their struggle for upholding and protecting autonomy—the other name of recognition of democratic norms, ethics and rights in the academic field—find an identity with their struggle for the cause of protecting and extending the democracy and democratic rights in other aspects of the life of the society.

Education being the superstructure the ruling bourgeois class orients it to its benefit

Again, in a class divided society, like other issues,

education also is not a supra-class issue i.e., not a subject matter that can be seen with equal eye by all the classes of the society and more particularly so by the ruling bourgeois class and the proletariat, the working people of the country. It is, therefore, bound to be patterned and influenced by the angularities and outlooks of the different classes of the society. Moreover, education being a powerful weapon, perhaps one of the most powerful instruments that help create, handle and develop social, mental make up, in a class divided society like that of ours, both the ruling capitalist class and the revolutionary working people of the country will try to orient it to serve their respective objects and interests. And none will disagree with the fact that the ruling capitalist class enjoying the state power and with all the instruments of the state under its control is in a far more dominant position to control education in its own class interest. And in the present era of monopoly capitalism, as we have already referred to earlier, in the academic field, this is being manifested, along with others, in curbing of autonomy of academic institutions and forcible, unethical and unjust imposition of the ideas and view point of the party in power, by suppressing that of the others. The genuine Marxist-Leninists, the leftists, the democratic minded people at large, on the contrary, correctly realises that in the academic field an environment which guarantees debate interaction, conflict and struggle between different thoughts and viewpoints as against the forcible imposition of a particular view, by suppressing the others, works as a pre-condition to help develop and establish pro-people educational views conforming to the norms and ethics of the democratic life of the people. It is for these reasons that whenever in different parts of the capitalist world whoever and

under whatsoever plea—be it on some ticklish issues concerning, 'technical', 'formal' and 'legalistic' aspects or even some factual charges of gross irregularities, corruption and mal-administration attempts to curb autonomy, the genuine left and democratic minded people lose no moment to unite and stand against that sinister design which is bound to lead to regimentation of thought and fascization in the academic arena.

Now whoever may take recourse to such anti-democratic move in the academic field, so long none has apprehended that party or parties claiming 'leftists' and 'Marxist-Leninists' can take such anti-democratic authoritarian steps in any country of the world.

But what we experience in our country?

In the past, whenever the then ruling Congress party took such steps or conspired to curtail autonomy, the parties who constitute the present 'Left Front', along with us, rightfully opposed those heinous moves in the academic field.

Taking over by the government means state's encroachment

Even the other day, the constituents of the very 'Left Front', who were then not in the government quite correctly opposed, along with us, the move to declare Calcutta University as an 'Institute of National Importance' during the previous Congress regime, on the ground that it would hit at the very root of autonomy of the Calcutta University. That day they were in the opposition, but today when they are in power, they have stepped into the same shoe left by the erstwhile ruling Congress Party, and are frantically trying to find fantastic logic most of which were once put forward in the past by the then ruling Congress Party in defence of their similar moves. Again, today on the contrary, many academic

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Since any Government in a capitalist state is its caretaker, control of the Government means the control of the capitalist state

(Contd. from Page 2) exponents of the Congress Party, including some of their political leaders who the other day defended similar move undertaken by the then ruling Congress Party, are now opposing an identical step taken by 'Left Front' Government. One may wonder, if there is any basic difference between the Congress Party of the capitalists and the CPI(M), RSP and FB—the constituents of the 'Left Front'—in question of attitude towards education and educational problem. Of course there exists a contradiction but that is not something relating to their basic attitude and approach at least in the matter of education and educational policy. It is, if one is allowed to term, a case of 'positional' contradiction.

Because, we find that it matters little if they are exponents of democratic socialism or claiming to be Marxists and the central point of the whole thing that determines their stand in these issues is their respective political position in the country, i.e. whether they are in the Governmental power or in the opposition bench.

What should be the approach of the genuine leftists to educational policy

Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the greatest Marxist thinkers of the era, a great leader of the proletariat, once, while analysing the role of a leftist party in governmental power within the capitalist framework, raised a question that, if a leftist party was elected to the governmental power then would it change its position regarding democratic norms, ethics, its attitude towards democratic right etc. that it so long maintained and fought for while in the opposition? **Comrade Ghosh** emphatically maintained that, on the contrary, a leftist party, if it was elected to the government, then it must have to fight to implement the very democratic norms,

ethics and rights for which it once struggled in the past while in the opposition. But what we experience with our CPI(M) friends? Is it not just the reverse of what one expects from a party claiming to be Marxist-Leninist? History has taught us that the social democrats, when they remain in the opposition, with an eye to gain popularity and the peoples' support behind them often pose as if they are the champions to the cause of democracy, democratic norms, ethics and rights. But once they go to the power, they at once betray their real character and take such steps and measures that make only the ruling capitalist class jubilant. We hope that the rank and file, the supporters and sympathisers of the CPI(M) would seriously ponder over it.

'Left Front' government's lame excuses

Now let us see what the 'Left Front' contend in their defence. The arguments and logic that they have so far attempted to put forward, all must agree, are so much weak, defensive and baseless that their condition would remind us of a drowning man trying to catch even a straw for survival.

In justifying their action the 'Left Front' Government and its constituent partners as well have attempted to draw our attention to the most painful deplorable state of affairs that now really exist in the University.

There is no denying the fact that the things at the University are in a great mess, charges of corruption, nepotism, groupism etc. are rampant. Most often it is being alleged that a group of so called academicians, utilising autonomy as a privilege has formed a vested coterie, having little or no moral scruple in adopting any unfair means to realise their heinous personal ends. Symptoms of serious mal-administration and bad administration which are

vivid throughout the entire institution, from the top to the bottom, stand in the way of discharging the obligation and responsibility of the University to fulfil the academic need of the country. As a result, the University is repeatedly failing in timely holding examinations and publications of results etc. etc.,

The questions that are being posed by the 'Left Front' Government and their followers are that, in such a situation would it all be judicious to allow the University bodies to function as usual? Would it not cause greater and irreparable damage to the academic interest of the people? And to add more, can a responsible government sit idle and allow such a deplorable state to continue? So, what harm, if in such a situation the government comes forward and with the object of setting things right supersede the University, and takes its control through a nominated body? Some of their followers, even ask, is autonomy so much sacrosanct so that under no circumstances it may be touched upon, in spite of the fact that a vested clique is performing all sorts of evil deeds thereby causing irreparable damage to the academic interest of the people, under its very cover?

Now all must agree that such a situation cannot be allowed to continue even for a day, further. And moreover, there can not be two opinions regarding the immediate need of regular holding of examinations, timely publication of results, streamlining University administration, removing corruption, nepotism, groupism, and improving academic standard etc. etc. But the most pertinent question is, does the remedy lie in superseding the University in a most high handed and bureaucratic manner, by replacing the elected bodies through government nominated bodies and persons? If the establishment of government control would have been a

panacea, then one would expect the government departments, government controlled organisations, and institutions to be free from nepotism, corruption and bad administration. But what is the actual picture? Is it not a fact that corruption, nepotism, ill-administration, etc. all are rampant in different departments, organisations and institutions under the direct control of the government? Has there been a sign of any improvement in this regard after the installation of the 'Left Front' Government in the state? We know that even the most fanatic supporter of the 'Left Front' Government would feel shy to reply in the affirmative.

How the Marxists view fight against corruption

A Marxist-Leninist does understand that in order to drive out ills like corruption, nepotism etc. from any walk of social life, one must have to build up necessary political consciousness, democratic norms, sense of ethical and moral values among the people, which alone can weed out all these ills by encouraging the growth of legitimate democratic mass movement. Moreover, since these evils of the academic field, like similar evils of other walks of social life, are part and parcel of the social maladies confronting the society today, any isolated attempt to fight against these evils of the academic field without fighting against the maladies of the social life as a whole is doomed to fail to realise the desired end. Under the circumstances, any one desiring to weed out these evils from the academic life of the university must have to develop a mighty democratic movement of the people against the social maladies and side by side with this struggle and as a part of it must have to organise a sustained mighty legitimate democratic movement in the academic field involving academicians, teachers,

students and even the people at large. But if the university authorities try to keep their eyes shut, maintain a deaf ear and cling to their old path, then and then only a responsible government, which pays respect to the democratic norms and ethics may come forward and that too only for giving a material shape to any demand that may have emerged out of the legitimate democratic movement of the people and therefore earned social sanction.

Autonomy is not an absolute concept in the sense that if any demand arises out of the legitimate democratic movement of the people and thereby earn social sanction then the authority with a view to giving recognition to democracy, democratic norms and ethics, may accept the said demand and do the needful. But at the same time, one must have to borne in mind that this never warrants the unilateral forcible imposition of any decision which has not evolved from the legitimate democratic movement of the people and therefore failed to get social sanction. Such a high handed anti-democratic move always tantamounts to attack on autonomy.

So, we could appreciate if the 'Left Front' had organised such a democratic movement involving the teachers, students and the people at large, and implement any step in this regard, that would have evolved as a demand out of that movement of the people in the academic field. But they carefully avoided that path. On the contrary, they have adopted a queer way to drive out the ills from the university. For instance, while keeping the administration which is mostly to be blamed for corruption and all other maladies, as intact, they have replaced the elected bodies by their nominated persons. So, a relevant question is, are they serious to remove corruption and

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Leftist Parties if Elected to the Government should fight for the Implementation of the very Democratic Norms, Ethics and Rights for which they struggled when in the opposition

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drive out the other maladies that the universities are suffering from, or is there any other ulterior motive behind this anti-democratic autocratic step? The question is very much relevant for other reasons too. Just on the eve of supersession the minister for higher education of the state was stated to have expressed that the nominated body would continue for one year and within that period fresh elections would be held following enactments of new Acts.

But, on the face of strong protests and oppositions raised by a large section of teachers, students, some members of the Senate, Academic Council and Syndicate, a section of prominent individuals, academicians, litterateurs and a large section of the democratic minded citizen of the state, who organised a number of conventions, seminars and public statements, their attitude became much defensive and they shifted a bit from their original position and both the chief minister and the education minister were later reported to have assured that the fresh elections would be held within six to eight months. One would humbly ask, would they succeed in fighting out corruption and driving out all other ills within six to eight months, or even say, one year? We know that even the utopians would dare not make such a claim. They might however argue that the cause of fighting against corruption and other ills would be carried forward by the newly elected bodies. If that would be the case, then had it not been proper and judicious if fresh elections would have been held to the bodies instead of superseding them, following the democratisation of the Acts? But they did never move in that way.

Talk of fighting corruption was only a cover

So, if any one observes that talks of fighting against corruption, mal-administration etc. all are nothing but mere excuses to cover the sole design of conducting the fresh elections under the control of some of their nominated persons, simply for achieving a desired result in the election, then will he be wrong? Does it not manifest a close parallel with the deeds of the reactionary bourgeois rulers who too when aim at a similar design, take similar steps and do so on similar plea of fighting against corruption, nepotism etc. etc.? In fact, how can the people forget that not even three years back Smt. Indira Gandhi defended Emergency on the plea, among others of mass copying in examinations and eradicating all sorts of corruption from academic and other institutions?

Now, with the object of realising their afore-said underlying design, the 'Left Front' in their bid to provide theoretical and ideological basis to their action, in fact has given birth to some infantile 'theoretical' propositions.

Such a proposition that is being attempted to gain ground among the people is, since the government claims itself to be 'left' and 'progressive', the control of such 'Left' Government on the university will enhance the cause of leftism. This only speaks of their utter ignorance of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism.

Because, firstly, if any one claims to be leftist, then does any of his moves then and there becomes 'leftist'? Is it such a simple matter? We know that none will accept that. Moreover, if some one at least for the sake of argument accepts his claim, still does it stand that the said move is bound

to be automatically 'leftist' and 'progressive'? Or, to put the question more precisely, how should one ascertain the intrinsic nature of any move? Is it determined solely by the character of the person, whoever he may be, who takes the move? Or, on the contrary does it depend primarily upon the actual nature of the effect that the said move leads to? Any conscious being should agree that whatever one may claim regarding the nature of a move, it is primarily the outcome, the effect that it creates which reveals its actual nature.

No genuine left party can help the bourgeoisie in encroaching on the freedom and autonomy of the universities

Now, in a capitalist state, whatever a government may claim regarding its own character, since the government is always the caretaker of the capitalist state, the control established by the government over the University through the aforesaid move, in the ultimate analysis is the control of the capitalist state machine established through control of the party in power in the parliamentary set up. Moreover, the aforesaid step while hitting at the very root of democratic spirit, norms and ethics and as we have already mentioned, by eliminating the scope of dialogue, debate, interaction and conflict between different thoughts and thereby forcibly imposing the views of the party in power in the academic field will bound to lead to regimentation of thought which the ruling capitalist class aims at in their bid to establish complete fascism in the country.

So, we would like to ask our 'leftist' and 'progressive' friends: what kind of leftism will be enhanced by such an anti-democratic move? Of course if leftism, according to their dictionary, means to serve

the cause of the ruling bourgeois class at the cost of democracy, democratic norms and ethics then it is altogether a different thing.

Further, one should note that a genuine left party, be it in the opposition or the government, can never take any such move, even with the object of incorporating anything genuinely left and progressive in the social life, that hits at the very root of democratic spirit, ethics and norms in the academic field. Because, they know it very well that such a step only works to create a bad precedence, before the ruling capitalist class and encourage them to perpetrate, anti-people anti-democratic moves with far more greater intensity and aggressiveness. So, like all other fields, in the academic life also they always strive for preservation and extension of democratic norms, ethics and rights and under no plea whatsoever, they encourage anything that may endanger democracy and democratic rights in any walk of social life.

At this stage, an inquisitive reader may logically ask that in a capitalist set up if a genuine progressive left party is voted to the governmental power then what policy should it pursue in the field of education? In this regard we would like to remind him what Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, a great leader of the world proletariat of the era taught us.

Comrade Ghosh once observed "The democratic forces of our country should resolutely fight for bringing in educational reforms not only to make education cheap, universal and secular in the truest sense of the term but also to democratise the entire educational system to conform with the democratic principles of life.

Therefore, the aim of any reform in our education system should be to strengthen the democratic struggle of the masses for completing the unaccom-

plished tasks of bourgeois democratic revolution namely the social and cultural revolution which is long overdue in our country." (Preface to Bartoman Siksha Paddhoti Aur O's Par EK Dristikone).

The task of the genuine leftists in the educational field

Such a policy demands drawing up of syllabii, curriculum and courses of study free from dogmatism, obscurantism, communalism, parochialism and all sorts of religious tutelage with the object of developing a scientific bent of mind among the students so as to enable them to acquire knowledge of integrated scientific system of thought covering the various branches of epistemology. The slogan for democratisation of education includes, in addition to bringing about such changes in the content of education that help grow a deeper sense of democratic norms and ethics—wider democratisation of the controlling authorities of the academic institutions which along with others can be materialised by strengthening and extending the autonomy of the academic institutions and more so of the universities but not in curbing or attacking it, even temporarily under any plea. So, in a capitalist set up, a genuine left party, be it in the opposition or the governmental power, must have to struggle for a truly secular, scientific democratic system of education and with that end in view, along with others should strive for protection and extension of democratic rights and autonomy in the academic field.

In the name of 'political reflection' the 'Left Front' Government is opening the floodgate of nasty political aberration in academic institution

The 'Left Front's' another proposition, put forward in their defence, that there must be political reflection of the ruling party in the

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Kerala DSO Conference

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the students should join in the political movements and issues of the country or not. She said that students' organisations guided not only by the reactionary bourgeois parties but even by pseudo progressives like CPI and CPI(M) are trying to dissuade the students from joining the AIDS O by pointing out that the AIDS O is guided by politics and the political party SUCI. They also try to delude the students with the prospect of careerism, wealth and easy life which will be marred if they join politics. Comrade Mukherjee urged upon the students to ponder deeply whether or not this is a part of the mischievous design of the ruling class which wants to perpetuate its rule of exploitation. For, whether they conceal or openly say as we do, every student organisation is guided by a definite politics, be it to subserve the ruling class or the exploited class or classes in our class divided capitalist society. Not to join in politics—is a particular politics which wants the exploited masses to remain ignorant about the conspiracy of the ruling class that is going on all around the society involving the life and future of the masses and the country. If the oppressed classes get hold of the correct political line, find the correct way of their emancipation and along with it, the emancipation of the society as a whole then this sordid design and class rule of exploitation of the capitalists will be ended. Whoever, therefore, tries to mislead the students' community which represents the youthful vigour of the country and which in every phase of social transformation played a glorious role the testimony to which fact being in the recent examples of the revolutionary struggles of China, Vietnam, Cambodia and even the national freedom movement of our own country, does so, not for the progress of the country, not for freeing the society from capitalist slavery and

all of its attended evils in social cultural-moral-ethical fields but to defend and perpetuate this heinous capitalist rule through this crafty means.

The students organisations whether the KSU, Vidhyarthi Parishad, Janatha—all representing the political thinkings of the branded bourgeois parties but even the so-called progressive students' organisations like AISF and SFI, the students' wings of CPI and CPI(M) show their near unanimity in educational schemes and designs of the ruling bourgeois class. What role the SFI and AISF have played and are still playing in these vital questions? They stood four square in defence of all the conspiracies of the ruling capitalist class. They supported the job-oriented education scheme and the then CPI(M) General Secretary Sundaraya gave an open call to the government to introduce it at the SFI conference, Delhi to which, our great departed leader and teacher **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh** gave a memorable rebuff.

Concluding Comrade Mukherjee said: Let us go to the students and toiling masses of our country to tell and explain to them the real question that lies before them—to grasp the revolutionary teachings of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, the great teacher of the proletariat wherein lies their real hope of emancipation. If we succeed in this great historic task developed on us then the future is certainly ours, the cause of revolution is certainly to be victorious—the emancipation of our exploited masses will not remain a distant dream, it will be a reality notwithstanding the vain efforts of the bourgeois and pseudo-revolutionary political forces and their organisations.

**Inquilab Zindabad !
AIDS O Zindabad !
Comrade Shibdas Ghosh
Zindabad !**

The Kerala State Conference of AIDS O came to an end in the public meeting at Chinnakada

Maidan on 13th Jan. Sri Rajagopal, Professor, TMK Eng. College, Senate member, Kerala University took the chair. Comrades Provash Ghosh, President and Chhaya Mukherjee, General Secretary of AIDS O were the main speakers besides Comrade James Joseph, Secretary, Kerala State Organising Committee of SUCI and Comrade Venugopal, Secretary, Kerala State Committee of AIDS O among other speakers.

Comrade Pravash Ghosh, said that in our country, the pseudo-revolutionaries not only betrayed the cause of the working class during the freedom movement by such black deeds as Joshi-Maxwell Pact during the Quit India movement but they have been continuing the same role during the last thirty years after Independence. But for the assistance of this force, it would have been difficult for the bourgeoisie to consolidate its rule. Even now when the branded bourgeois parties are showing instability and can not hold the masses under subjugation, the so-called Left-Front in West Bengal led by CPI(M) and with Jyoti Basu a Polit Bureau member of that party as its Chief Minister is showing how the pseudo-left and pseudo-Marxists have actively engaged themselves in the service of the crisis ridden bourgeoisie.

In fine, Comrade Provash Ghosh urged upon the students and youths in particular to know and grasp the great revolutionary teachings of **Comrade Shibdas Ghosh**, the great teacher of the proletariat and come forward in building up revolutionary organisations based on and guided by his thoughts so as to hasten the struggle for emancipation of the exploited masses from the capitalist bondage.

Comrade Chhaya Mukherjee also gave a long and inspiring speech. Comrade J. James, in his speech called upon the students and youths to isolate the social democratic forces who are causing great harm to revolutionary (Contd. to Page 8)

Comrade Debaprasad Sarkar MLA presents the problems of Rural Labour on behalf of UTUC (Lenin Sarani) at the Special Conference New Delhi

New Delhi, 28th January:

At the Special Conference on Unorganised Rural Labour convened at New Delhi on 25th January by the Ministry of Labour, Government of India, Comrade Deba Prosad Sarkar MLA, representing UTUC (Lenin Sarani) demanded of the government, regular works for the agricultural labourers and the rural poor round the year and encouragement to their legitimate movements by declaration and strict adherence to the policy of non-interference of police in those movements.

The magnitude of the rural labourers who are still today mostly unorganised can not be measured from the 1971 census nor from the government's so-called claims of achievement in terms of doles or reliefs distributed—said Comrade Sarkar, at the outset. He reminded that the number of landless labourers and destitution of the poor peasants were always on the increase due to the inexorable law of capitalism. And this can not be solved within the framework of capitalist productive system. What therefore could be done, he said, within this basic limitation were some urgent democratic reforms but even in that case, the attitude should be different from the present stereotyped one.

First, it should be kept in mind that although recovery of benam lands and their distribution among the poor and the destitutes is an important and urgent democratic reform, it can not by itself solve the basic ills in rural life. The tiny patches of land being economically not viable will slip out of the hands of the receivers. What the agricultural labourers and village poor need for their bare survival is regular work throughout the year and only the government, can ensure this.

Secondly, the agricultural workers who should also include in their category the share-cropper must be ensured living wages either in cash or kind. For obvious reasons, there cannot be complete uniformity in the rate of wages but wages must be living wages. But does the announcement of the government of minimum wages mean anything for the rural labourers? The announcement remains on paper for want of implementing machinery. Thirdly, the basic problem lies here. Whatever legislations or government announcements with avowed good intentions may be there, but they are not going to help the rural poor as plethora of such in the past did not help them. By mere change of law in the existing capitalist set up, nor by depending on the bureaucracy which today is a part and parcel of the bulwark of reaction in the country side also, meaningful social changes can not be brought about notwithstanding the pious wishes of the government. If therefore, a government wants to be as good as their words, it must come forward to encourage legitimate democratic movement and for that purpose not only should declare that "police shall not interfere in the legitimate democratic movements" of the toiling people as the UF Government in West Bengal did in 1967 at the initiative of SUCI but should sincerely adhere to that, otherwise all talks about good and welfare of the poor, be it in rural and urban sector, will be empty talks.

Comrade Sarkar, rebutted the so-called achievement of the Left Front Government claimed by one of the speakers Comrade P. Rammurthy of CPI(M), at the Conference by holding that it had no relevance to reality. The fact that the agony of the rural poor did not come in the bourgeois dailies could never mean its absence but indicated something more complex a situation.

Restoration of democratic rights really means not merely retention but extension of existing freedom and autonomy of the Universities

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academic institution is no less fantastic. This reflects their utter ignorance regarding the dialectics that exists between politics and political views on the one hand and education on the other hand. Not to speak of science of dialectics, had they understood the relationship that exists between the educational views and politics, even in a limited sense, then they could have realised that let alone the Marxist-Leninists, the leftists, even the democrats did not believe in creating political reflection in the academic field mechanically with the help of the governmental machinery and bureaucracy.

Education being the part and parcel of the superstructure of a given economic base, here too, like other domains of superstructure there will be a constant conflict and struggle between the different class-oriented educational views. Any right thinking man must agree that it is only out of struggle that the pro-people educational view, will make the people more and more conscious of its scientific and progressive character, superiority over other viewpoints and by exposing their bankruptcy, conservatism, utter inadequacy and unscientific character ultimately establish itself over the people. If there is a genuine left government in the country, its sole responsibility is to see and help this struggle, like people's struggles in other fields, to continue but not to arrest it on any plea, even temporarily. And if any legitimate democratic demand evolves out of this struggle centring round educational system and policy, then it should have to come forward and do the needful for implementing the same. So, we see that at least in the question of reflection of the pro-people educational views in the academic field no such trick of creating political reflection mechanically by the governmental machinery yet exists. Of

course, in the past, we have experienced similar attempts of establishing political hegemony in the academic field in identical manner by the Congress. But so long, we considered it to be within the exclusive right of the reactionary bourgeois rulers and the despots. Now we see the 'Left' Government of the state led by the party claiming to be Marxist-Leninist treading on the same path.

Let alone all these theoretical and ideological issues involved herein, we would like to simply ask them, don't they ever think that their so-called plea that there must be political reflection of the ruling party on academic institutions is fraught with the danger of opening the flood-gate and creating a bad precedence of political aberration of academic institutions with each and every change of the character of the government through election? In a capitalist set up, will it not give a handle to the reactionary bourgeois governments to fulfil their class interest, their desired aim? Last but not the least, do they ever think that their so-called proposition of creating political reflection in the academic field finds a close analogy with the idea of creating 'political reflection in the judiciary' which Smt. Indira Gandhi once put forward to defend her move of appointing a junior judge as the Chief Justice of Supreme Court by superseding a number of senior judges?

We hope that at least the supporters and rank and file of the party would critically examine the issue and seriously think over it.

The 'Left Front' government's queer logic to hide facts in defence of their undemocratic act

None, not even the strong supporter of the 'Left Front' can help but accept that the position of the 'Left Front' Govern-

ment before the people centring this malicious move in the academic field has become precarious indeed. In their frantic bid to justify their anti-democratic drive they are trying to put up this or that queer logic, none of which however does stand on critical examination and so completely fails to save their face.

Take for example the question of university bodies 'outliving their tenure.' The 'Left Front' in defence of their move tried to plead that the different bodies of the said universities already 'outlived' their tenure of office as if the dissolution of such bodies which were 'living' on 'borrowed' life was not against democratic norm nor did it tantamount to an attack on autonomy. First let us find out the actual fact. During the period of the erstwhile Congress regime in the state, on the request of the then government which was stated to have desired to introduce certain amendments into the existing ACs, the university had to extend the life of the bodies for a period of six months. Meanwhile political change took place and the 'Left Front' Government was installed in the State. Now, when the university began all the preparations for the elections to the different bodies the said government also on an identical plea requested the university to extend the life of the different bodies and as usual the university complied with the request of the government and extended their life. So, in the nutshell, this is the whole story behind the allegation of 'bodies outliving their tenure' of office. But strangely enough, the government is now trying to justify its action of supersession of these bodies on the plea that they were living on 'borrowing'. At least one must have a limit to his impudence!

So, if any one now alleges that the request to

extend the life of the bodies were planfully made with an eye to build up a plea in justification of their future move of supersession which might have been already in their mind when the said request was made to the university, then what should they say in their defence?

Slogan of dissolution raised from the platform of legitimate democratic movements could only justify the act

Now, let us see, if the dissolution of an 'outlived' body and the situation in which they have done it is legitimate and democratic. We are of the opinion that whether a body has outlived its tenure of office or not is never the central focal point at issue for ascertaining if the act of dissolution of the said body is legitimate and democratic for, it may so happen that a 'living' and democratically elected body, for various reasons, may become a puppet in the hands of a vested clique and as a result may become out and out anti people. In that case, though it is still a formally democratically elected body, but in reality in the background of peoples' interest and democratic ethics and norm, such a body ceases to be democratic and hence has lost all its moral and ethical right to continue in existence. But still then such a body cannot be dissolved until such a step earns social sanction. Now, if the legitimate democratic movement of the people can establish its anti-people, undemocratic character before the society—if the said movement can convince the people that the said body has lost all its moral and ethical right to exist any more and thereby earns social sanction in favour of the demand of its dissolution, that may have then evolved out of the said movement, then the recognition of the said demand and its implementation is the only legitimate

and democratic step that one must adopt in the circumstances. It was for this reason that the demand for dissolution of the legislative assembly that was raised from the people's movement in Bihar once in the past was no doubt legitimate and democratic. And it is for this reasons too that since long time past the demand for 'right to recall' the elected members of the legislative bodies has been occupying a foremost position among the demands of the legitimate democratic movement of the country. The dissolution of the managing bodies of some academic institutions, that are being done, if that is done in conformity with this democratic norm and principle then that too are legitimate. But to the contrary, if an elected body outlives its tenure of office and even if it repeatedly fails to discharge its duties and responsibilities, still its dissolution is not legitimate so long this does not come in the form of a demand from the legitimate democratic movement of the people and thereby earns social sanction. In such a situation also the only alternative course, as we have already referred to earlier, is a fresh election. But what they have done, instead of what ought to have been done—does that not manifest that with the object of realising sectarian party interest, they are after establishing their hegemony over the university by placing some persons according to their own choice on the helms of affairs of the university?

Because, had it not been their real motive then why would they—apart from trying to cling to fantastic logic and far-fetched arguments, utter such and such things in their defence which tantamount to naked distortion of facts?

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Where were the differences between the Government and the Calcutta University

Lest anyone is inclined to doubt even to the least, we would like to refer to that part of the observation of the Higher Education Minister of the State appearing in the daily press where he in justifying their action of supersession mentioned that the university failed to take positive stands regarding Pre-University course and the duration of the Hons. course of study. The facts, however, would tell otherwise. In regard to the Pre-University course, the university for fulfilling its obligation and responsibility to the student community correctly decided to continue the said course for this year too. And in the question of duration of the Hons. course of study, any one with the usual habit of going through the daily press must have noted that the university, not only once, but twice decided in favour of two years Hons. course of study following the new higher secondary course of twelve years. So, if any one, whoever he might be, would observe that the university failed to decide on the said courses of study then would it not be a travesty of truth? Is there any difference between the unethical peddlers of opportunistic politics and these people who in a 'leftist' cloak practise such abhorred ethics and morality? From several well-informed sources and press reports it came to light that in regard to the above mentioned courses of study, the government held opinions distinctly different from that of the university.

Now according to the statutory position, the university is the authority to decide on academic affairs. But all should agree that at times it may so happen that any section of the society, quite legitimately may feel that some particular decision of the university is against their academic interest and therefore, hold a different

Any move by a left party that hits at the very root of Democratic spirit creates precedence and encourages the capitalist class to perpetrate anti-democratic, anti-people moves in greater intensity and aggressiveness

opinion on the said issue. Likewise, a divergence in views may be reflected by the government and the university on certain academic matters. A most logical question is, how then one should resolve it? Will the issue be brought before the academic polity and all the parties concerned should accept what evolves out of the debates, discussions and dialogues between the teachers, students, university, government and if necessary the society at large? Or, on the country, will the government by utilising its statutory legislative power forcibly impose its own decision over university on the plea that the university bodies are not reflecting the ideas and views of the government and with that end in view dissolve the said bodies and bring the university under its control by placing its own chosen committee on the top—a step that has actually been taken in the case of the premier university of the country? It is an ethical question, and any right-thinking man, we know, should prefer the first alternative and abhor the anti-democratic step that the 'Left Front' has taken as it smacks of autocracy and authoritarianism.

The 'Left Front' Government spokesmen are taking recourse even to hypocrisy

So far we have analysed and exposed the hollowness of the different logic and reasons that the 'Left Front' put forth to defend themselves. We have shown that with the object of justifying their action they took recourse to some pieces of fantastic logic, put arguments beyond the imagination of any sensible man and to add more, also tried to distort facts even. This is no doubt despicable. This is too understandable in the sense that what else can one think of, to defend

his ill-designed sectarian motive? But what might yet appear to some people as hard to believe that they took recourse to hypocrisy even.

It was a naked fact that they superseded the university, trampled down its long standing glorious tradition of autonomy and academic freedom. Now, had they openly given recognition to that fact, as it was, then one might have appreciated them at least for having the necessary moral courage and honesty to call a spade a spade. But we found them to lack even in that honesty and trying to confuse the issue and to befool the people they are making such remark that autonomy would still be preserved! We would like to ask them, what does autonomy mean?

Does it mean—which the academic and democratic minded people in different parts of the world, in essence, have accepted, that the university bodies constituted on the basis of academic and democratic norms must have the right to function free from any interference of the powers-that-be, and implement any decision that may evolve within the said bodies out of the debates and conflict between the different angularities and viewpoints? Or does that mean—as they have done it, to forcibly arrest the scope of such debates and dialogues between different views by dissolving the bodies constituted on the basis of academic and democratic norms and allow their own chosen persons, even if they are great stalwarts in the academic field or giant leaders of teachers' movement, to act 'freely' within the periphery of their own views i.e. within the arena of the government oriented 'views' and academic 'freedom', so to say? Would anybody be able to forget the affairs of the Jawaharlal Nehru Univer-

sity in Delhi where famous academic stalwarts chosen on helms of affairs of the institution were at liberty to enjoy similarly oriented 'academic freedom' which of course did never stand in their way to 'freely' co-operate with the then Indira Government which let loose a naked fascistic regime in the campus during the period of Emergency? We think that it needs no further discussion, because each and every right thinking man does really understand what autonomy is. So far we had the idea that everything has a limit, even fraudulence. But now we are to experience that at least in case of some people even this has no limit. And this category includes even persons who boast themselves as to be the 'leftists', the 'Marxist-Leninists'.

Despite tall claims the whole move of the 'Left Front' was prompted by the design to establish narrow party control over University Education

From the aforesaid analysis and discussion it will be clear to every sensible man, and there will remain not even an iota of doubt that despite all claim by the 'Left Front' Government and its constituent partners, their whole move which reminds us of similar drives often undertaken by the bourgeois rulers and despots is basically prompted by the design of the CPI(M) led 'Left Front' to establish narrow party control over University Education. With a similar motive to establish their sectarian party control over Secondary Education they superseded the Board of Secondary Education of the State and their chosen famous 'teacher leader' in the capacity of the administrator is engaged in superseding the different

school authorities by their chosen persons. And pursuing an identical line they superseded the university, to establish their party control over university and higher education. The next victim would perhaps be the other academic institutions in the field of higher education i.e. the colleges—a section of which termed to be 'sponsored' colleges had already been superseded by the government nominated administrators.

They demand for autonomy, for more power to the state, but on the contrary launch attack on the very little rights and autonomy which the universities, educational boards and different academic institutions still use to enjoy. These moves are not only grossly inconsistent with each other, but self-contradictory too, though of course in both the cases the aim is one and the same i.e. to establish their party hegemony by whatsoever means possible. And it is not at all unexpected that both of their moves get full backing from the ruling bourgeois class, the monopolists. In our previous issue. (P. Era-1st January 1978, article on CPI(M)'s demand for more power to the states and the question of centre-state relation) we have dealt in detail and shown how their demand for greater autonomy to the state serves the bourgeoisie and more particularly the monopolists. So also, their attack on autonomy and academic freedom will certainly not fail to get the blessings of the ruling bourgeois class, the monopolists who are after regimentation of thought, curtailment of democratic and political rights in every sphere of social life—the inevitable moves that they must have to take recourse to, along with others, for establishing total fascism in the country.

Our Appeal

In such a critical situation when like democracy, democratic and political

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Make SUCI Candidates Victorious

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so long the sole representative of the aggregate interest of Indian monopoly capitalism has been acting as the main enemy of the people. The bitter experience of the common people which was at its peak particularly during the darkest days of the Emergency clamped by Smt. Indira Gandhi bears glaring testimony to the depth of crisis which the Indian capitalism has been plunged. The sooner the Congress Party irrespective of the fractions in which it has been divided recently—gets defeated and completely isolated from the people, the better for them.

"The installation of the Janata Party at the centre and in different states, although symptomatic of deep anti-Congress feeling of the masses, has not brought about any radical change in the country in as much as it still carries the legacy of the Congress rule through the introduction of the 'two-party system' designed to arrest the legitimate democratic mass movements within the narrow bounds of parliamentarianism. Failure of the Janata Government to repeal outright the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution, enactment of another Preventive Detention law in place of MISA,

using the coercive apparatus of the state to quell the legitimate democratic mass movements in different states and their pursuing of pro-monopoly, pro-jotedar policies shows no basic difference with the Congress. So, it will be the bounden duty of the people of Assam to give defeat to this bourgeois alternative also in order to forestall the conspiracy of the 'two-party system'.

"Our party strongly feels that the formation of a united left and democratic front on the basis of a minimum programme and a code of conduct with the aim of defeating both these representatives of the bourgeois class and strengthening, step by step, the legitimate democratic mass movements as a precursor to anti-capitalist socialist revolution is the only solution at this phase of democratic mass movement.

"But it is a tragedy that the CPI(M) and its allies, no matter whether there is breakdown of electoral understanding of these parties with the Janata in the state of Assam, still finds progressiveness in and calls Janata Party, the bourgeois alternative, a friendly party.

"It is further to be noted that the CPI(M) and its allies by their narrow typical sectarian politics

have dealt a great blow to the prospect of united left and democratic front as an instrument of struggle our repeated efforts to build up that instrument have met with failure due to the sectarian politics particularly of the CPI(M).

"The people of Assam cannot but note with concern the path pursued by the CPI(M) particularly in West Bengal. They have not only given up the path of legitimate democratic mass movements by pursuing a typical non-left policy in all spheres of activities but have also taken recourse to appeasing the monopoly bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy in their frantic bid to be a third alternative in the very same mechanism of 'two-party system'. This is a gross betrayal of leftism in the name of leftism.

"We, therefore, call upon the people of Assam that while making every effort to forge a united left and democratic front in the line suggested above or in its absence striving hard for setting up peoples' own candidates they should come forward to make the SUCI candidates victorious in order to strengthen the base political line of the proletariat to be built up on the edifice of political power of the people".

elsewhere) was released to the Press condemning this cowardly attack. The incident has exposed the real character of CPI(M) to the people and evoked wide public protest and indignation.

organisers of Kerala State Committees of AIDSO and SUCI. A statement by Comrade M. Sabramani, President, Kerala State Council of AIDSO, (given



Kerala AIDSO Comrades injured by the CPI(M) hooligans: On the right Comrade Venugopal, Secretary Kerala State AIDSO, hand bandaged and with blood-soaked dress. On the left Comrade Yesudashan seriously injured and lying on bed.

Attack on University Autonomy

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rights in other spheres of social life, democratic ethics, norms and rights in academic field too are at stake, we would like to appeal to the progressive academicians, individuals, teachers and students to come forward and stand firmly united to protect the very rights from onslaught and extend it.

For, it would be a pity if the present generation

of educationists, teachers and students remain indifferent and therefore allow the erosion and subversion of the hard-earned glorious tradition of autonomy and academic freedom which the earlier generations had struggled hard to build.

We call upon them to rise up to the occasion and discharge the responsibility that history has devolved upon them.

CPI(M) Attack on AIDSO Conference Condemned

Comrade M. Subramani, President, Kerala State Council, AIDSO has released the following statement to the Press on CPI(M)'s cowardly attack on AIDSO Conference:

After the open session of AIDSO State Conference at Chinnakada Maidan, Quilon addressed by Comrade Pravash Ghosh and Chhaya Mukherjee President and General Secretary of AIDSO, SFI-CPI(M) hired goondas made a pre-planned and dastardly attack with iron rods, soda bottles, bulbs, bamboo poles etc. on DSO members including the State Secretary Comrade Venugopal, the treasurer, Comrade Yesudashan, Comrade A. Jalaluddin,

member, Quilon District Committee, SUCI and six others of whom three have been hospitalised with grave injuries.

The State Committee calls upon the students, teachers, guardians and the people at large to condemn this brutal attack and give defeat to the politics of goondaism pursued by SFI and CPI(M). We also call upon the CPI(M) and SFI to give up this politics of goondaism and create healthy political atmosphere in the state. We urge upon the concerned authorities to take stern steps against the goondas involved in the heinous and cowardly attack with a palpable criminal design.



Kerala DSO Conference

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movement of the toiling people under cover of pseudo-revolutionary phrase mongering but actually serving the capitalist class interest.

Comrade Venugopal, State Secretary of AIDSO congratulated the people and the students in particular for making the conference a grand success and hoped that this would be a turning point in the revolutionary working class movement in the state.

After the public meeting on 13th CPI(M) organised a dastardly attack with hired hoodlums against important leaders and

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